

to the pulling down of strongholds.") II Cor. 10: 3, 4.

3. The prophets predicted a cessation of war so far as the reign of Christ should extend. Isa. 2: 4: "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy king cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle-bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea *even* to sea, and from the river *even* unto the ends of the earth." Zech. 9: 9, 10.

4. Reason cries aloud that subjects of "the Prince of Peace" should not engage in carnal warfare. God's former people were also one nation; and when they engaged in wars it was with other nations, and not with themselves. But the gospel of Christ is to be preached throughout the world, and Christians should be found in all nations, and the more the better. Now, if they will become soldiers and form a part of the different armies of the world, they will be arrayed against each other, and will kill each other. What kind of brotherly kindness would this be? What kind of a holy kiss, or kiss of charity? What kind of fellowship and washing of one another's feet? What sort of a love feast and communion? What kind of joining in the song of the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men?" What kind of an offering of the petition, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors?" May God ever preserve us from such flagrant, hideous and sinful inconsistency.

5. We are now brought right up to the question as to how far we, as Christians, may take a part in civil government. This is an important question; and it is to be feared that some of our brethren, as many other professing Christians, are not as careful and guarded as they should be. Perhaps some vote for officers, and some even accept of offices, whose functions may require them to disregard or violate some of the principles of pure and vital Christianity. This should not be; and as "the body of Christ," we should oppose it, and, in fact, not allow or suffer it among us. Paul says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers;" and again, "Come out from among them, and

be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." II Cor. 6: 14 18. The revelator says, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins." Rev. 18: 4. No Christian should have any fellowship with any society or people, or allow himself to be placed into any position or office, where he would be a participant in anything wrong. The church should not allow it.

In conclusion the reader is reminded of the fact that the gospel of Christ is also called "the gospel of peace;" Rom. 10: 15; Eph. 6: 15; and peace is recommended, or enjoined, or pronounced as a benediction, throughout the New Testament Scriptures. In the night of his betrayal, Jesus said to his disciples, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." John 14: 27. Paul admonishes his Hebrew brethren: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. 12: 14. Your brother now adopts the language of Paul, II Thess. 3: 16, "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all." AMEN.

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#### SUBJECTS FOR CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

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The Brethren Church has declared itself as being opposed to man-made creeds, rituals and confessions of faith, and has accepted the pure, unadulterated Word of God as its creed and ritual, believing that it is true, and that it teaches men how to serve him acceptably. This book which we have accepted as "The man of our counsel," teaches the necessity of Christian baptism, and defines the qualifications which must precede it. From these, there must be no deviation save at our own risk. How much such a risk involves, only God knows now, but "we shall know hereafter." Though many seemingly tangible theories and opinions have advanced in support of *infant* baptism, it must yet be clear to every Bible reader that they have no scriptural foundation, and failing here, they have really no foundation at all. For the present, they may pass without divine challenge, but in the great Future, I fear that, like the house built upon the sand, they will utterly fall, and involve their authors in terrible ruin. At any rate, the Brethren Church rejects them entirely and will have nothing but "thus saith the Lord." In setting forth the qualifications for baptism, its reasons for such rejection will become apparent.

The Word teaches that subjects for

Christian baptism, must have a knowledge of him into whom they are to be baptized. For we are baptized into him. Romans 6: 3 and Gal 3: 27. It is not reasonable to expect nor demand man's conformity to a standard of which he is ignorant. He is asked to "believe," but "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard" (Rom. 10: 14,) and "Faith cometh by hearing" (Rom. 10: 17.) This must mean an intelligent hearing and understanding. Therefore only those who thus hear, and feel their need of a Savior, being capable of receiving instructions as to the way are subjects for the solemn rite.

Faith is required as a condition to baptism. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16.) "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest be baptized" (Acts 8: 37.) "Believe on the Lord Jesus" (Acts 16: 31.) Rom. 10: 9, 10, 11; Heb. 11: 6 and many other scriptures which leave no room for doubt or cavil upon this point. Each one must exercise faith for himself, for our relationship to God is entirely personal. When Jesus says "I am the vine, ye are the branches," (John 15: 5.) He does not mean that the various denominations are the "branches," but that we, personally, who put our trust in him, are such. I may "believe" with my whole heart and my faith may exert a salutary influence over the members of my household, but it cannot avail them anything, unless they render a full and spiritual obedience to God. Infants are not capable of exercising faith, because they have no knowledge of God. They are, therefore, not proper subjects for Christian baptism. To administer it to them, may seem nice, and even have an impressive aspect, but it lacks scriptural foundation, precedent or sanction.

Only those who have repented of their sins are qualified to receive it. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13: 3.) "Repent and be baptized" (Acts 2: 38.) "Repent and be converted" (Acts 3: 19.) "He commandeth all men to repent" (Acts 17: 30.) "They should repent and turn to God" (Acts 26: 20.) Repentance is godly sorrow for sin, and sin is willful transgression of God's holy law, whether by omission or commission (James 4: 17.) In these days of enlightenment, no adult or youth is ignorant of God's wishes and will concerning him. Withholding the service he requires, makes them all sinners. When they realize their isolation from God, and that it has been brought about by their sins, when they honestly and fully repent of them, having faith in him,